

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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FM USMISSION USUN NY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4252
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 6172

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UNGA, SHUM, SOCI, SGEN

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH AFRICAN AMBASSADORS ON AMNESTY RESOLUTION

1. AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN, AMBASSADOR BENNETT, CLARENCE MITCHELL, AND LEONARD GARMENT MET NOVEMBER 19 WITH AMBASSADORS BLYDEN (SIERRA LEONE), AMBASSADOR THOMAS (LIBERIA) AND AMBASSADOR BOATEN (GHANA) TO DISCUSS US PROPOSAL FOR AMNESTY OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY POINTING OUT THE RISK THE UN RUNS IN FAILING TO APPLY UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY UNIVERSALLY. IF APPLIED ONLY SELECTIVELY, IN CASES OF FOR INSTANCE SOUTH AFRICA AND CHILE, PUBLIC OPINION IN SOME COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE US, WILL REACT NEGATIVELY AND GIVE LESS CREDENCE TO THESE PRINCIPLES AS ETHICAL STANDARDS. THERE WILL BE IMPRESSION THAT UN DOES NOT REALLY CARE ABOUT THE GENERAL ISSUES. SPEAKING TO THE AMENDMENTS, AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN STATED THAT THE IDEA BEHIND SOME MIGHT BE SUCCESSFULLY INCORPORATED INTO THE TEXT WHILE OTHERS, SUCH AS THOSE LEGITIMIZING TERRORIST ACTIVITY, COULD NOT.

2. AMBASSADOR BLYDEN (SIERRA LEONE) SAID THAT HE WAS ORIGINALLY CONFUSED BY THE TREATMENT OF THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE FIRST PREAMBULAR PARA BUT WAS REASSURED TO KNOW THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE RES WAS UNIVERSAL. HE ALSO NOTED THAT TO DATE
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THERE HAD BEEN AN ELOQUENT SILENCE OF THOSE COUNTRIES THAT MATTER

IN HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, PARTICULARLY WESTERN EUROPEANS. AMBASSADOR THOMAS (LIBERIA) SAID THAT THERE WAS UNFORUNATELY A TENDENCY AMONG MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO BE TOO INFLUENCED BY THE SOVIET VIEWPOINT.

3. AMBASSADOR BOATEN (GHANA) SUGGESTED THAT BECAUSE OF THE GREAT NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO CONDUCT AND THEREFORE A WORKING GROUP MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED. HE FURTHER SAID THAT IT WAS NOT REALISTIC TO MATCH UP THE IDEALISTIC PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE CONSTITUTIONS OF MANY COUNTRIES, INCLUDING HIS OWN, AGAINST THE REAL PROBLEMS IN THE NEWER NATIONS. HE ADDED THAT PRESSURE MUST BE MAINTAINED ON SOUTH AFRICA TO IMPROVE THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF THE BLACK MAJORITY.

4. IN RESPONSE AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN SAID THAT THE US DEL WOULD DISCUSS THESE SUGGESTIONS WITH MEMBERS OF THE WEO GROUP AND BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH THEM. AMBASSADOR BOATEN ENDED BY STATING THAT HIS DEL DOES NOT SEEK CONFRONTATION IN THE UN AND HE PREFERS TO WORK IN FAVOR OF HARMONY AT THE UN.
MOYNIHAN

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